DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 244 160 CE 039 037

TITLE	Transition from Compulsory and Upper Secondary School to Further Education or Employment--the GUARANTEE Project.
INSTITUTION	National Swedish Board of Education, Stockholm.
PUB DATE	Apr 84
NOTE	18p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	School Research Newsletter; n3 Apr 1984
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Career Education; *Community Responsibility; Community Services; *Cooperative Programs; Education Work Relationship; *Employment Programs; Foreign Countries; Models; Organization; Postsecondary Education; Program Development; School Business Relationship; *School Responsibility; Secondary Education; *Unemployment; Vocational Followup; *Youth Employment
IDENTIFIERS	*Sweden

ABSTRACT

In late summer 1979 the GUARANTEE project was launched in Sweden to gather information on activities to combat youth unemployment and on followup and other activities within the scope of municipal followup responsibilities. The project was organized in the form of a case study of nine municipalities. The first three years were concerned mainly with following the introduction and development of the youth guarantee and followup responsibilities at central and municipal political and organizational levels. During year 1, activities included charting the labor market and educational facilities as well as conducting interviews to describe the nature of followup responsibilities. In year 2, staff continued the survey of followup responsibilities, enlarged studies of local organization of followup responsibilities, and attempted a characterization of the youth population. During year 3, most municipalities reported more satisfaction than before with the practical workings of followup responsibilities due in part to the development of an organizational model. The second phase of the project (years 4 and 5, 1982-84) included a questionnaire survey of young persons born in 1964 and an evaluation of the organization and forms of cooperation that have evolved in GUARANTEE municipalities. (YLB)

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ED244160

APRIL 1984

TOPIC
Youth unemployment
Youth guarantee
Follow-up responsibilities

1984:3

CURRENT PROJECT

TITLE OF PROJECT Transition from compulsory and upper secondary school to further education or employment - the GUARANTEE project

What is the youth guarantee?

What do school follow-up responsibilities imply?

How have they been organised in certain municipalities and what are the conditions governing that organisation?

How is collaboration between schools and employment organised?

How are young persons being given the opportunity of education or employment?

Who is taking part in these activities?

How will these activities affect the position of schools in society?

These are some of the questions which we are trying to answer in a follow-up survey of the YOUTH GUARANTEE and FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES in the nine municipalities of Södertälje, Jönköping, Simrishamn, Tomelilla, Ystad, Sotenäs, Hagfors, Arvidsjaur and Piteå. In the course of this project we have followed the development and construction since autumn 1979 of municipal follow-up responsibilities for young persons aged 16 - 17.

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Published by National Board of Education in Sweden, Department for Coordination and Planning, Information and Documentation Section, S-106 42 Stockholm, Sweden. Telephone: +46 8 14 06 60.
Responsible Editor: Inger Marklund. Editor: Mona-Britt Hanse.
ISSN 0345-5343

NEWSLETTERS 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984

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1984:2	THE SIAu PROJECT: Project description

Background

Rising unemployment among young persons was observed during the 1970s, partly because young persons began to be statistically segregated in labour force and labour market surveys.

Like any other unemployment, youth unemployment is cyclically conditioned in the sense of diminishing when there is an upturn. On the other hand, youth unemployment has differed from total unemployment by tending to remain at a higher level during every up-cycle.

Policy makers were highly aware of the danger entailed by youth unemployment. Apart from its disastrous effects on the individual, unemployment has grave implications for society as a whole, and this prompted discussions of a youth guarantee. When the term was first launched - in a Riksdag Bill introduced by the Liberal Party (1975:399) - the demand was for opportunities of meaningful education or employment to be promised to all young persons up to the age of 25.

At the same time as it passed the SIA Bill (1975/76:39), the Riksdag made it the responsibility of schools, together with municipal employment offices, to follow the progress of all young persons for two years after they had left compulsory school. The purpose of this follow-up was to support pupils who for various reasons might have difficulty in completing education or entering employment after leaving school. In addition, local SSA committees - SSA being short for "co-operation between schools and employment" - were to be set up in every municipality and made responsible among other things for planning and practical measures connected with municipal follow-up responsibilities.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s there occurred a "16-year-old bulge", which means an unusually large number of

16-year-olds leaving compulsory school and either entering employment or going on to upper secondary school. The biggest change occurred between 1979 and 1980, when the number of 16-year-olds was 9,300 up on the preceding year. Ten years later there will be 20% fewer 16-year-olds. The size of the bulge varies somewhat from one county to another, but in the great majority of counties the number of young persons in this age group will not diminish until the 1984/85 school year.

The project entitled "Transition from compulsory and upper secondary school to further education or employment - the GUARANTEE project" was launched against this background in the late summer of 1979.

Purpose and method

The purpose of the GUARANTEE project was to gain experience of

- activities preventing youth unemployment
- follow-up and other activities within the scope of municipal follow-up responsibilities.

At a more detailed level, the purpose of the project is as follows:

- To chart municipal measures relating to youth unemployment, primarily up to age 18.
- To describe the forms taken by these measures.
- To provide a feedback of experience from these activities between municipalities and administrative authorities and to the persons most immediately affected.
- To explain the dependence of forms of activity on local conditions in the labour market, in the education system and with regard to municipal organisation.

- To attempt an outline of the future role of schools in the local community.

The project was organised in the form of a case study of nine municipalities, selected by the following criteria:

. geographical distribution
. population structure
. economic structure/labour market
. educational amenities.

The nine municipalities of Södertälje, Jönköping, Simrishamn, Tomelilla, Ystad, Sotenäs, Hagfors, Arvidsjaur and Piteå have been included in the project. The original plan was for the GUARANTEE project to last for three years, but as work progressed and the circumstances surrounding follow-up responsibilities were transformed and enlarged, at the same time as employment problems deepened, it was decided that activities ought to be followed up for another two years, and the project was therefore extended.

When reporting on the project, the first three years (1979/80-1981/82) can be regarded as a concluded phase in which we were mainly concerned with following the introduction and development of the youth guarantee and follow-up responsibilities at central and municipal political and organisational levels. That phase concluded with the theoretical report entitled "The function of school and measures to combat youth unemployment".

During the second phase of the project (1982/83-1983/84) we are undertaking a questionnaire survey of young persons born in 1964 and an evaluation of the organisation and forms of co-operation which have evolved in GUARANTEE municipalities.

In the course of the project we have employed interviews, studies of legislation and minutes of proceedings, statisti-

cal analysis and questionnaire surveys. The personnel strength of the project team has varied from one period to another.

The following is a short summary of the progress, experience and results of the survey from its inception until the time of writing.

Year 1 - 1979/80

During 1979/80 we charted the labour market and educational amenities in the nine municipalities. We conducted an introductory round of interviews with decision makers and handling officers in schools and at employment offices and within public authorities of various kinds concerned with education, employment and youth affairs. The interviews dealt with and described the forms assumed by follow-up responsibilities and also touched on views concerning youth unemployment and education.

The following were the principal findings obtained during the year.

- Concepts such as the youth guarantee, follow-up responsibilites and youth unemployment proved to be exceedingly vague, and their interpretation was found to vary a great deal from one municipality to another.
- The political nature of youth unemployment seemed to evoke hasty, often vaguely constructed decisions and recommendations, making work at local level sporadic and discontinuous.
- Statistical material on which to base assessments of relations between education and employment, for example, were often lacking at local level. Insofar as they were available they were frequently ignored.
- Theoretical work concerning the workings of organisations and theories concerning evaluation yielded a number of interesting viewpoints concerning this

aspect of the continuation of the project. Observations of this kind included the very different ways in which different administrative authorities tended to define problems, owing to the structure and formal regulations of the individual organisation.

In view of these experiences and the results of the introductory work, the political background to the youth guarantee and follow-up responsibilities was reviewed at the end of the year. The report then compiled - "Youth guarantee - political rhetoric or security for the young?" - describes discussions concerning the youth guarantee and follow-up responsibilities within political parties, the Riksdag and Government Commissions.

Year 2 - 1980/81

Our work in 1980/81 was divided into three parts. First of all we continued our survey of follow-up responsibilities. The circumstances attendant on follow-up activities had been radically transformed by the passing of the Youth Opportunities Bill (1979/80:145) in May 1980. The new legislation underlined the responsibilities of schools for young persons, relief work projects for youngsters under 18 were discontinued and replaced by vocational induction, at the same time as apprenticeship opportunities were expanded. In addition, increasing effort was devoted to the expansion of upper secondary schooling, especially the 2-year vocational lines. Upper secondary schooling was made the first resort for preventing and counteracting youth unemployment. As a national benchmark, it was recommended that 85% of young persons in each year should go straight on from compulsory school to upper secondary school.

The Youth Opportunities Bill came under heavy fire in most municipalities, mainly because of the limited time allowed for preparations. We nonetheless found that schools and employment offices had on the whole adjusted successfully to

the new measures, though it had cost them a great deal of very hard work. Vocational induction agreements gradually multiplied. During the initial phase, difficulties were sometimes experienced in motivating young persons for this kind of education/occupation. From central level, a great deal had been said about trade union protests, but these were not much in evidence when we contacted SYO (educational and vocational orientation) advisers in the municipalities included in our survey. Upper secondary school apprenticeships occurred on a very limited scale. There were several reasons for this, the most important one being that employers found the scheme too expensive.

Secondly during this year, we enlarged our studies of the local organisation of follow-up responsibilities with reference to LEAs and SSA committees. More extensive and detailed interviews were conducted with head teachers, SSA secretaries, placement officers and members of LEAs and SSA committees. One result of this part of the study was the paradox of explaining youth unemployment as a labour market problem while at the same time pursuing, and being forced to pursue, educational measures. Another result was criticism of the SSA committees. Co-operation between LEA and SSA committees proved to be inefficient in many cases. The LEAs had delegated almost their entire follow-up responsibilities to the SSA committees. Due to the central regulations governing schools, the Employment Service and the labour market, local planning and adjustment are heavily restricted and highly uniform.

Our third task for this year was an attempted characterisation of our youth population, by means of an interview survey of SYO advisers. We established that these young people could be divided into two main groups. The smaller of the two groups contains those who have made a definite occupational choice. Their school marks are just below the score

required for their education of first preference. Job experience credits will give them a reasonable chance of attaining their objective. Vocational induction was an acceptable alternative to these pupils.

The largest group of youngsters are quite unmotivated for education. They need paid employment and with it the opportunity of building up their self-confidence in an occupational situation. As far as they were concerned, vocational induction was a poor second.

Year 3 - 1981/82

In purely organisational terms, most municipalities now reported that they were more satisfied than they had been with the practical workings of follow-up responsibilities. They had devised a viable organisational model, an approach enabling the organisation staff to act independently in the follow-up and activation contexts and also in the administration of induction programmes, negotiations with employers for induction places, the drawing up of contracts and so on. Resources, however, were said to be inadequate and the personnel concerned were often employed on a project basis.

Certain new problems were reported during spring 1982. Starting at the New Year, under an agreement between the employers' associations and trade unions, youth opportunities had been introduced, mainly for the benefit of 17-year-olds who had failed to obtain any employment on completing their vocational induction. Reports now began coming in to the effect that the market was growing saturated with "trainee employees" of various kinds. Employers were favourably disposed to vocational induction and other activities aimed at making pupils more prepared for entering employment, but there was a limit to the numbers which the various workplaces were capable of admitting. At the same time, the new com-

pulsory school curriculum, due to take effect on 1st July 1982, put further pressure on workplaces to receive pupils for visits and work experience periods. It now began to be asked whether the practical training systems were producing regular employment opportunities in the open labour market. If this is so, the system of expanded practical working life orientation accepted by all parties has a very grave dysfunction in that it is liable to aggravate youth unemployment.

A special study beyond the scope of the regular municipal studies was undertaken during the year. This study, concerning follow-up activities in the Municipality of Göteborg, was described in a report entitled "The Göteborg model - presentation and discussion". This report contains an exhaustive description of the Göteborg model and compares it with the Youth Opportunities Bill. The Göteborg model comes off best, for example because it puts more emphasis than the Bill on the problems of young persons who lack educational motivation, the importance of social establishment in the adult world, the need to provide economic compensation for young persons who are not taking part in formal education or regular employment, and the importance of a new universal system affording greater flexibility, co-ordination and proximity. Time, flexibility, proximity and co-ordination are the essence of the Göteborg-model approach.

The organisation of follow-up activities Södertälje and Jönköping has to a great extent been inspired by the Göteborg model.

The report "The function of schools and measures to counteract youth unemployment" marked the end of the first phase of the GUARANTEE project. This report employs a broad and variable theoretical approach in analysing interview data collected previously. Follow-up responsibilities and the

youth guarantee are viewed in relation to the outward and inward organisation of schools and their social functions. One consistent theme is actors' definitions of situations and phenomena, analysed in relation to the structural conditions and margins of action which the actors' positions afford.

The report also discusses school developments and relations between schools and other institutions in a variety of historical and sociological perspectives. Relations between schools and employment are discussed, and the report observes that with the passing of time there has been an increasing tendency for the causes of youth unemployment to be attributed to deficiences of the labour force rather than a shortage of jobs. The administrative apparatus, which is concerned mainly with individualised measures, has been given the task of looking after the unemployed. The education system has by several stages acquired progressively greater responsibility for the results of national under-employment, one of the many reasons for this being that we have grown accustomed to the expansion of the education system. The report queries the augmented responsibilities imposed on schools and instead recommends that they should have fewer responsibilities at local level. The youth guarantee and follow-up responsibilities are general policy decisions affording opportunities for a certain amount of decentralisation and local control of education and youth employment opportunities. In practice, however, every administrative authority complies with central directives and bureaucratic rules, so that decentralisation is more apparent than real. Co-operation and co-ordination are often used as conjurations to prevent centralisation and sectorialisation, and faith is pinned on solutions of the kind represented by the SSA committees. If efforts were made to detach the youth guarantee and the concretisation of follow-up responsibilities from the large formal administrative organisations, this would have the advantage of making personnel more of a municipal

concern instead of a State or municipal concern. This too would make it easier to find particularly suitable people and to vary their duties according to local needs rather than central directions. Furthermore, it would be easier to devise organisational arrangements more closely tailored to local conditions and needs.

Years 4 and 5 - 1982/83 and 1983/84

The GUARANTEE project has continued during what has been termed a deepening recession. Consequently the original problems - youth unemployment - have grown in magnitude despite the counteractive and supportive measures deployed. The resources and frames for policy measures have been continuously expanded and transformed. Cyclical and structural unemployment, the relatively large generation of young persons coming within the scope of follow-up responsibilities, and the changing conditions affecting follow-up responsibilities and the youth guarantee between them comprise the investigative and evaluative field with which the GUARANTEE project is concerned.

For the first three years, the main focus of the inquiry was on the emergence and materialisation of organisations, viewed in a contextual continuum, and on human beings, viz politicians and officials within the organisations at local level.

During this period we will be concentrating on two main fields:

1. The youngsters - what has happened to the young persons involved in the various measures and programmes introduced to counteract youth unemployment?
2. Organisational arrangements - what forms of co-operation have evolved and been made permanent?

To elucidate field 1, the youngsters, a questionnaire was circulated at the end of February 1983 to young persons born in 1964. When the Youth Opportunities Bill was passed by the Riksdag in May 1980, these youngsters were the first group to be affected by the new measures comprising induction programmes, vocational induction, apprenticeship and, eventually, youth opportunities, at the same time as relief work projects for young persons under 18 were discontinued. These youngsters reached the age of 18 in 1982, which excluded them from the immediate follow-up responsibilities of municipal authorities/schools. They were all 18 years old when the questionnaire was sent to them in February 1983. In this way they can be said to constitute a "verdict" on the efficacy of these various measures in keeping young persons in practical training, education or employment. The questionnaire survey provides the answer to such questions as:

- What was the two-year period following the compulsory school resolution actually like in terms of housing, education and employment/unemployment?
- Where and in what form of employment are the individual youngsters to be found in the week of the survey?
- What parts have been played by SYO and the Employment Service respectively?
- What about upper secondary school and educational choices?
- What happens to young persons completing or discontinuing their upper secondary schooling?
- Employment and conditions of service; how did the youngsters obtain their jobs?

Career description (the term career referring here to the description of a course of events, e.g. education - employment - education or employment - unemployment - education) is thus a central field of inquiry in this questionnaire survey. Another such field is the description of the employment

situation in relation to locality and in relation to educational activity.

The results of the questionnaire survey will be presented during the spring of 1984 in a report entitled "Patterns of education and working life in the nine GUARANTEE municipalities".

Organisational design is the second main field of inquiry in this latter phase of the GUARANTEE project. After several years of activity, most municipalities have devised permanent follow-up machinery. Circumstances were transformed once more as from 1st July 1983, when the new system of 2-year individual action plans and youth opportunities was due to take effect. A concluding evaluation of various types of municipal follow-up organisation is now in progress. A pilot study has been completed in Jönköping and is being presented in reports 10 and 11: Evaluation of follow-up activities in the Municipality of Jönköping. That study will be supplemented later during the spring by means of data collected from other GUARANTEE municipalities. A final analysis and concluding report will be presented in autumn 1984.

One last problem field which the GUARANTEE project will be touching on and which will be evaluated more closely in a supplementary study funded by the Minister of Labour concerns the organisation of youth teams in municipalities covered by the GUARANTEE project.

MATERIAL COMPILED DURING AND IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROJECT

Reports (Nos. 1-10 published, No. 11 printing, No. 12 in preparation.)

1. Blomsterberg, Marianne & Svensson, Lennart
Population, education and employment in nine municipalities. 1980.
(In Swedish)

2. Stridbeck, Ulf
Youth guarantee - political rhetoric or security for the young? 1980.
(In Swedish)

3. Blomsterberg, Marianne & Svensson, Lennart
The youth guarantee and bureaucracy. Findings, conclusions and reflections after one year's work. 1980.
(In Swedish)

4. Blomsterberg, Marianne
Municipal follow-up responsibilities - theoretical and practical premisses.
(In Swedish)

5. Svensson, Lennart
The organisation and people surrounding follow-up responsibilities. 1981.
(In Swedish)

6. Borhagen, Kerstin
The Youth Opportunities Bill - legerdemain? Who are these measures designed for? 1981.
(In Swedish)

7. Svensson, Lennart
The function of schools and measures to counteract youth unemployment. 1982.
(In Swedish)

8. Schale, Carsten
The Göteborg model - presentation and discussion. 1982.
(In Swedish)

9. Blomsterberg, Marianne
Evaluation of follow-up activities in the Municipality of Jönköping. I. The organisational study. 1984.
(In Swedish)

10. Carlsson, Elaine
Evaluation of follow-up activities in the Municipality of Jönköping. II. The youth study.
(In Swedish)

11. Blomsterberg, Marianne
Patterns of education and working life in the nine GUARANTEE municipalities. 1984.
(In Swedish)

12. Blomsterberg, Marianne
Evaluation of follow-up activities in the GUARANTEE municipalities. Summary, analysis and conclusions. 1984.
(In Swedish)

(These reports are obtainable from the Department of Sociology, University of Göteborg)

Articles

Blomsterberg, Marianne. Employment, identity and ego-experience,
In Arbetsliv och utbilding. Liber 13/1982
(In Swedish)

Blomsterberg, Marianne. Mobility and immobility as factors of selection in education and employment. In ERU-rapport 34 Vem får jobben? Ed. Ulla Björnberg, Industridepartementet 1983
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Sjöstrand, Per. The labour market for young persons. In ERU-rapport 34 Vem får jobben? Ed. Ulla Björnberg, Industridepartementet 1983
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Svensson, Lennart. How to subdue an economic crisis by schooling: The case of Sweden. In Capitalist crisis the state and schooling: Comparative studies in the politics of education, R & K, 1984

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School Research Newsletter is published and distributed in an edition of 450 issues ten times per year. The Newsletter is obtained free of charge.

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